

Collecting and working with conversational data

Robert Englebretson

This workshop offers tips and tools for recording, transcribing, and analyzing naturally-occurring talk-in-interaction. While such data has tended to be of primary interest to researchers in the fields of Conversation Analysis (CA) and interactional sociolinguistics, we will explore some of the ways in which variationist sociolinguists can likewise benefit from using non-elicited, spontaneous talk as well (conversation outside the purview of traditional sociolinguistic interviews and oral histories). Examples will be presented from the SBCSAE (Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English) and the author's own corpus of colloquial Indonesian conversation. The workshop will provide an introduction to various configurations of field recorders (Edirol R-09,, R-09HR, M-Audio Microtrack, etc.) and microphones (one-point stereo, lapel, box-mounted, and in-ear); will offer a brief look at various software useful for transcribing and time-aligning (most notably VoiceWalker and CLAN); and will discuss the pros and cons of two of the notational systems for transcribing spoken interaction (the Discourse Transcription system developed by John W. Du Bois, and the transcription system for Conversation Analysis developed by Gail Jefferson and colleagues).